



AARINENA

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EDITORIAL

AARINENA in collaboration with its partners continues fostering agricultural research and development, strengthening regional partnerships in a consortium mode, further contributes to sharing and exchanging of knowledge and technology, and fostering mutual learning and innovation, as well as take advantage actions by initiating generic modules and functional mechanisms such as commodity and technical networks and Regional Agricultural Information System (RAIS). Enormous thematic conferences, symposiums, workshops and training courses have been organized regionally. As a Regional Association, AARINENA has important benchmarks in research prioritization and impact assessment related activities carried out in close collaboration with its stakeholders. The Association also continues contributing in the collective actions regionally to meet emerging challenges to agricultural development. AARINENA has been consistently striving to enhance its membership and to this effect has approached several institutions, centers, universities, and NARS to enroll as new AARINENA members.

All these issues necessitated further debating in the AARINENA 11th General Conference held last October 2008. The Conference was attended by over 60 participants representing AARINENA member NARS, regional and international organizations, NGOs, private sector, regional fora and donor organizations. The meeting was co-sponsored by FAO, GFAR, FARA and ICARDA in collaboration with the General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research in Syria. The deliberations were conducted in five technical sessions that dealt with global and inter-regional collaboration, research activities that included Regional Information System, networks, priority setting, linking farmers to market, change process proposed for the CGIAR and international assessment of agricultural knowledge, science and technology for development (IAASTD). Followed by administrative issues resulted in the adoption of constitutional amendments and the North Africa Sub-Region Organization (NASRO) Constitution.

The Conference adopted a work plan that included strengthening of AARINENA regional agricultural information system, revisiting priority setting, supporting regional cooperation through networks and supporting establishment of global partnership program for linking farmers to market. The conference recommended that AARINENA as an active regional forum to mobilize all stakeholders to identify priority areas of agricultural development where the generation and use of knowledge can make most difference in sustainable development. To do so will require investment in regional planning and establishing key priorities as essential elements in ensuring that subsequent research delivers development impact. The conference also recommended conducting joint research on implementing biotechnology applications to solve the problems of climate change. The Conference emphasized those priorities in information system to include managing scientific and technical information, research data management, and linking research and innovation to the needs of producers.

Finally the Conference elected the president and five new executive committee members representing AARINENA five sub regions in addition to allocating three seats for GFAR, CGIAR and NGO representatives. The editors would like to congratulate the newly elected members and wish them success in promoting agricultural research for development in the region.

Editors

